

Myth buster: It's more expensive to eat healthy

Many people believe that it costs more to eat healthy. But you can eat healthy with FirstLine Therapy without substantially increasing your food budget. You may even spend less on food than you do now.

We shopped local grocery stores and food chains to discover cost differences between a day's meals on the FirstLine Therapy eating plan compared to meal options commonly found in SAD (i.e., Standard American Diet). Our efforts revealed patient savings in overall dollars and calories with the FirstLine Therapy plan.

FirstLine Therapy vs. SAD: Potential Health Effects

1-Day Sample Menu	FirstLine Therapy	SAD*
Breakfast	2 scoops of medical food blended or shaken with ice and water 2 boiled or scrambled eggs	Cereal with 2% milk and sliced banana
Snack	4 oz. plain Greek yogurt with ½ cup cubed cantaloupe	Caffè mocha and blueberry muffin
Lunch	Chicken "burrito" bowl: chicken, black beans, brown rice, onions/bell peppers/zucchini sauteed in olive oil, lettuce, tomato, salsa, guacamole, hot sauce, and lime	Cheeseburger, french fries, chocolate shake
Snack	2 scoops of medical food blended with water and frozen peaches. ½ cup fresh baby carrots	Iced caramel latte blended and chocolate chip cookie
Dinner	Grilled salmon, steamed lentils, baked sweet potato with butter, grilled asparagus. Green salad with tomato and olive oil/balsamic vinaigrette	Spaghetti with meat sauce, caesar salad, diet cola
Snack	Apple wedges with almond butter	None
Calories	1,805	4,309
Glycemic load (GL)**	45	326
Potential health effects	Improvement in overall health, reduced sugar cravings, improved satiety, increased energy levels Decreased risk of chronic disease	Increased sugar cravings, decreased satiety, reduced energy levels Increased risk of chronic disease.

*This sample menu may not be representative of all eating habits under the Standard American Diet.

**The glycemic index (GI) is a food ranking system based on the rate at which the body converts a fixed serving of food into glucose. A high-GI food (typically sugary or more processed carbohydrates) triggers a spike in blood sugar, while a low-GI food will cause a small, gradual rise. The glycemic load (GL) not only takes the GI into account but also a typical (or recommended) portion size and fiber content. This is considered a more meaningful way of gauging the impact that different foods have on blood sugar levels. A GL of < 80 per day is considered optimal.

FirstLine Therapy vs. SAD:* patient savings

Sample shopping lists and costs per serving for one person

Meal	FirstLine Therapy		SAD	
Breakfast	2 scoops of medical food (Ultra Glucose Control®)	\$4.00	1½ cup popular brand breakfast cereal	\$0.56
	2 eggs	\$0.75	1 cup 2% milk	\$0.16
			1 sliced banana	\$0.41
Snack	4 oz. plain Greek yogurt	\$0.18	16 oz. caffè mocha, whole milk, no whipped cream	\$4.15
	½ cup cantaloupe	\$0.50	Blueberry muffin	\$2.75
Lunch	4 oz. chicken	\$1.75	Large cheeseburger	\$3.99
	½ cup black beans	\$0.17	Medium french fries	\$1.79
	⅓ cup brown rice	\$0.10	Small chocolate shake	\$2.19
	½ cup onions/bell peppers/zucchini (1 tsp. olive oil)	\$0.96		
	1 cup lettuce and tomato	\$0.45		
	¼ cup salsa	\$0.96		
	2 Tbsp. guacamole	\$0.28		
	1 tsp. hot sauce	\$0.02		
	Lime wedge	\$0.06		
Snack	2 scoops of medical food (Ultra Glucose Control)	\$4.00	16 oz. blended caramel coffee beverage, no whipped cream	\$4.45
	½ cup frozen peaches	\$0.63	Chocolate chip cookie	\$1.95
	½ cup baby carrots	\$0.37		
Dinner	4 oz. salmon	\$1.75	2 cups cooked spaghetti noodles	\$0.32
	½ cup lentils	\$0.17	1 cup meat-flavored sauce	\$1.00
	½ medium sweet potato (1 tsp. butter)	\$0.49	1 cup romaine lettuce	\$0.43
	15 asparagus spears	\$1.11	4 Tbsp. croutons	\$0.22
	1 cup salad greens	\$0.43	2 Tbsp. dressing	\$0.13
	½ cup tomato slices	\$0.13	12 oz. diet soda	\$0.38
	1 tsp. each olive oil/balsamic	\$0.09		
Snack	½ small apple	\$0.25		
	1½ tsp. almond butter	\$0.13		
Cost		\$19.73		\$24.88

Homemade variety will cost less per serving. Food items were purchased in the Orange County, CA area. Actual costs (in US dollars) for single-serving portions may vary by location and season. Prices do not include applicable sales tax.

*SAD = Standard American Diet